

program even further. Currently, farmers who suffer from outbreaks of plant viruses and diseases are not eligible for benefits from the federal crop insurance program, noninsured crop assistance programs, or emergency loans. My bill would enable farmers who suffer crop losses due to plant viruses or plant diseases to be eligible for all of these programs. Crop destruction from viruses and diseases should be covered under these programs just as other natural disasters are. I invite all of my colleagues to cosponsor H.R. 473 and I urge immediate consideration and passage of H.R. 473.

Farmers deserve an affordable safety net program that will provide a worthwhile benefit when they are most in need. Although H.R. 2559, the Agriculture Risk Protection Act of 1999 would not extend protections to producers whose crops suffer from plant viruses or diseases, I believe it does improve and expand the safety net available for farmers and is a step in the right direction. I support H.R. 2559 and urge its immediate passage.

TRIBUTE TO CROSSING GUARDS

HON. ROBERT E. ANDREWS

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 5, 1999

Mr. ANDREWS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend and thank those who have dedicated a portion of their lives to ensuring that our young people throughout the First Congressional District of New Jersey are provided safe journey to and from school.

Each day crossing guards put their lives in harms way to protect our children from the dangers they may face on the way to school, whether that be a speeding car ignoring posted school-zone speed limits or a drug dealer pushing poison on our young people.

In September, I held a ceremony back in my district to honor 20 crossing guards for their exemplary service to the children of their communities. As a parent of two young girls, I commend them for taking time from their lives, for little compensation, to assure us as parents, that our children will have a responsible adult looking over them literally every step of the way from the time they leave the house in the morning until they sit at their desks to begin their school day.

Through torrential downpours, driving snowstorms, blistering heat and frigid cold, our children can count on crossing guards to be there providing a familiar face to guide them on their trip to and from school. On behalf of the 106th Congress of the United States of America, I thank the following crossing guards for keeping our children safe every day.

The following crossing guards were honored at a ceremony at Camden County Community College on September 13, 1999: Mrs. Angelina Esposito, Burlington Twp, Mrs. Carmella Caruso, City of Burlington Schools, Mrs. Barbara Laute, Oak Vally Elem-Deptford Twp, Mrs. Marie Snyder, Shady Lane Elem-Deptford Twp, Mrs. Janette Multanski, Brooklawn, Mrs. Cynthia Peaker, Willingboro, Mrs. Maureen Saia, Washington Twp, Mrs. Mary Ann Wurst, Woodbury Heights, Mrs. Sue Hynes, Woodlynne, Mrs. Tina Castelli, Principal—Good Intent Elementary—Deptford Twp, Mrs. Ruth Rosenblatt, Somerdale, Mr.

Darwin Branch, Camden, Mrs. Frances Oliveri, Mount Laurel, Mr. Robert Bobo, Brooklawn, Mrs. Alice Watson, Runnemede, Mr. Robert Kelly, Laurel Springs, Mrs. Theresa Keehfuss, Maple Shade, Mr. David Pressler, Maple Shade, Mrs. Anne Sprague, Bordentown, and Mrs. Carol Robinson, Audabon.

HONORING COLUMBUS DAY AND ITALIAN HERITAGE MONTH

HON. BENJAMIN A. GILMAN

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 5, 1999

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate one of the most courageous events in human history, Christopher Columbus' voyage to the New World. In this day and age, when man has walked on the moon and when we can afford to lose a twenty five million dollar satellite in the atmosphere of Mars because somebody "mis-calculated," it is easy to dismiss the courage of Christopher Columbus as no big deal. In reality, it was a very big deal. The three ships Columbus commanded on his first voyage, would today probably be classified as large yachts. Columbus did not have any radio contact with the mainland. He did not have any modern computers to help him navigate. All Columbus basically had was courage, skill, and good luck.

Often, we read that Columbus was not the first voyager to reach the Americas. It is contended that the Vikings, the Irish, and perhaps even the Phoenicians, were here first. Some scholars contend that the lost tribe of Israel journeyed to America and are the ancestors of Native Americans. This may all be true. Yet, it is all irrelevant. Columbus may not have been the first to make the journey, but he was certainly the first to appreciate its significance. Columbus recognized that by reaching the Americas by sailing west, he was opening a whole new world to the people of Europe. He recognized that this was a benefit to everyone, a benefit he believed that it must not be kept secret.

Columbus was also fortunate in that his discovery voyage took place soon after the discovery of moveable type. Thus, publicizing his voyages became more practical than could have been the case just fifty years earlier. Since Christopher Columbus was of Italian extraction, he became the first Italian whose life was intertwined with the history of America, starting a tradition that continues to this day.

Giovanni da Verrazano, who discovered New York Harbor, Constantino Brumidi, whose paintings adorn the rotunda in our U.S. Capitol Building, Guglielmo Marconi, who invented radio, and Joe DiMaggio, whose feats on the baseball diamond won the respect, admiration and love of all Americans, are only a few examples of Italians and Italian Americans who have long been a vital force in American history. They contributed significantly to our culture, improved our way of life, and helped create the America which strides across the world of today.

Accordingly, it is fitting that we commemorate Columbus Day and Italian Heritage Month as a way of not only remembering the courageous contributions of one remarkable man, but also to express our appreciation to the many Italians who have helped us throughout the years.

IN HONOR OF WILLIAM D. MASON

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 5, 1999

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and congratulate Bill Mason for being named Parma Democrat of the Year.

Bill Mason, Cuyahoga County Prosecutor, has had a successful and fulfilling career. Born on April 13, 1959 in Cleveland, Ohio, he went on to attend and graduate from Cleveland-Marshall College of Law. Mr. Mason served as an Assistant Prosecuting Attorney in the Cuyahoga County Prosecutor's Office from 1987 through 1992. Here, he was able to gain valuable experience in criminal law. In 1992, Mr. Mason was elected by the voters to the Parma City Council. Shortly afterwards he was appointed as Parma's Law Director and Chief Prosecutor. During his service, Mr. Mason was able to improve efficiencies in the office over four consecutive years. By doing this, he was able to dramatically improve the enforcement of local laws, saving taxpayer resources.

Recently, Mr. Mason was elected Cuyahoga County Prosecutor by an overwhelming majority of the Cuyahoga County Democratic Party's Central Committee. Mr. Mason's position as the county's chief law enforcement officer is well deserved.

He has been privileged to have the support of his loving wife, Carol, and his four children Marty, Kelly, Cassidy, and Jordan.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate Bill Mason for being named outstanding Democrat in the city of Parma.

IN RECOGNITION OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AWARENESS MONTH

HON. ELLEN O. TAUSCHER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 5, 1999

Mrs. TAUSCHER. Mr. Speaker, I rise in recognition of October as Domestic Violence Awareness Month. Domestic Violence Awareness Month is a national campaign created to focus public awareness on the problem of domestic violence.

As we are all too aware, domestic violence is the leading cause of injury to women between the ages 15 and 44 in the United States. More women are injured as a result of domestic violence than are injured in car accidents, muggings, and rapes combined. Women of all cultures, races, occupations, income levels, and ages are battered by husbands, boyfriends, and partners. Batterers are not restricted to low-income or unemployed men. Approximately one-third of the men who undergo counseling for battering are professional men who are well-respected in their jobs and communities. These include doctors, psychologists, ministers, and business executives. Domestic violence also affects children. Half who live in violent homes experience some form of physical abuse. Unfortunately, one-third of boys who grow up in violent homes become batterers themselves, simply perpetuating the cycle.

I am proud that in my district, victims of domestic violence have been able to turn to Battered Women's Alternative. For the past 21